

AMAZING ADVENTURES

THRILLING SCIENCE-FICTION COMICS!

# AMAZING

ANC

## ADVENTURES



EARTH FEMALE

NO. 2 10c

EARTH MALE



EXHIBIT ONE  
★  
WEDDING GIFT

*Monsters of*  
LIVING FLAME





WEB COMIC  
UNIVERSE.COM



# COSMIC COMICS



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# MONSTERS OF LIVING FLAME!



**F**AR IN THE DEPTHS OF INTERPLANETARY SPACE, JON HALJAN AND HIS COMPANIONS SEARCH THE MYSTERIOUS LITTLE FIRE PLANET FOR PRECIOUS URANIUM-X WHICH THE UNITED STATES SO DESPERATELY NEEDS FOR ITS ATOMIC BOMBS! BUT THOUGH THEY DO NOT KNOW IT, TREACHEROUS MURDERERS STALK AT THAT SITE, AND THE FATE OF AMERICA IS AT STAKE AS THEY BATTLE THE GRISLY---

**MONSTERS OF LIVING FLAME!**

JON HALJAN, PILOT OF AN EARTH-MOON MAILSHIP, IS ON VACATION IN GREAT-NEW YORK WHEN HE RECEIVES A STARTLING MESSAGE!...

THIS IS PROFESSOR GRANT! WHY-WHY, OF THE MT. WHITNEY OF COURSE, ASTRONOMICAL PROFESSOR! FLY HERE BUT--WHAT IS IT? AT ONCE, HALJAN! IT'S A MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE!



I CANNOT EXPLAIN ON THIS PUBLIC WAVE! USE EVERY PRECAUTION FOR SECRECY!

I'LL COME AT ONCE, PROFESSOR!



AT THE OBSERVATORY, HAL JAN MEETS TWO OLD FRIENDS, FREDDIE BLAKE AND HIS SISTER LINDA, BOTH GOVERNMENT CHEMISTS!

FREDDIE, LINDA--?!  
WHAT ARE YOU TWO  
DOING HERE?

WE'RE AS SURPRISED  
AS YOU ARE, JON!

EVIDENTLY THE PROFESSOR  
WANTS TO SEE ALL  
THREE OF US!



AS YOU KNOW, THE NEWLY DISCOVERED ELEMENT, URANIUM-X, IS EXTREMELY FISSIONABLE-- IDEAL FOR ATOMIC BOMBS! ENEMY GOVERNMENTS KNOW IT, TOO! THEY HAVE A LITTLE OF IT, AND SO HAVE WE!

WONDER HOW THIS  
CONCERNS US!

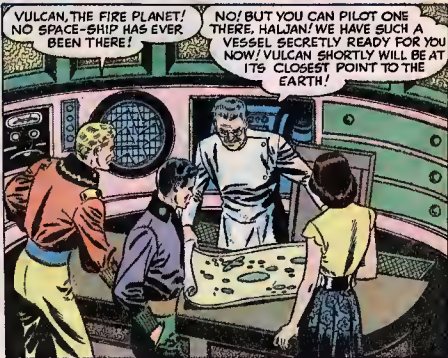


URANIUM-X EXISTS IN ALMOST PURE STATE ON THE PLANET VULCAN! THE SPECTROGRAPHS SHOW IT! WE ARE SURE OF IT NOW! I'VE SENT FOR YOU THREE-- WELL, BECAUSE AMERICA DESPERATELY NEEDS THAT URANIUM-X!



VULCAN, THE FIRE PLANET! NO SPACE-SHIP HAS EVER BEEN THERE!

NO! BUT YOU CAN PILOT ONE THERE, HAL JAN! WE HAVE SUCH A VESSEL SECRETLY READY FOR YOU NOW! VULCAN SHORTLY WILL BE AT ITS CLOSEST POINT TO THE EARTH!



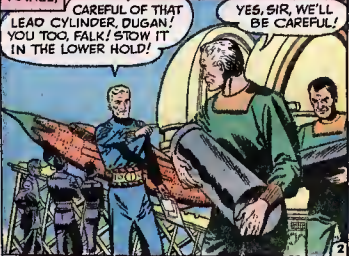
WE KNOW LITTLE ABOUT VULCAN, SINCE ITS DISCOVERY IN 1990! BUT WE WANT YOU THREE TO ATTEMPT THE VOYAGE-- BRING BACK TO US THE URANIUM-X-- IF THAT IS HUMANLY POSSIBLE!



WITHIN A WEEK THE LITTLE GOVERNMENT FLYER WAS READY TO START ON ITS SECRET MOMENTOUS VOYAGE!

CAREFUL OF THAT LEAD CYLINDER, DUGAN! YOU TOO, FALK! STOW IT IN THE LOWER HOLD!

YES, SIR, WE'LL BE CAREFUL!







AND PRESENTLY...

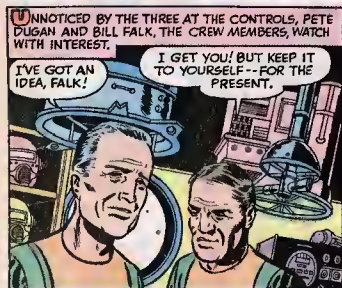
GOODBYE! GOOD LUCK!



DELVING FAR INTO UNEXPLORED INTER-PLANETARY SPACE, THE LITTLE FLYER HURTTLES ONWARD TOWARD THE FIERY SUN!

YOU'RE AN APT PUPIL, LINDA!

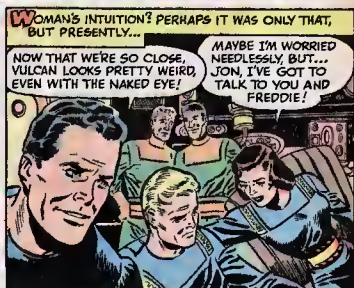
IT'S THRILLING!



UNNOTICED BY THE THREE AT THE CONTROLS, PETE DUGAN AND BILL FALK, THE CREW MEMBERS, WATCH WITH INTEREST.

I'VE GOT AN IDEA, FALK!

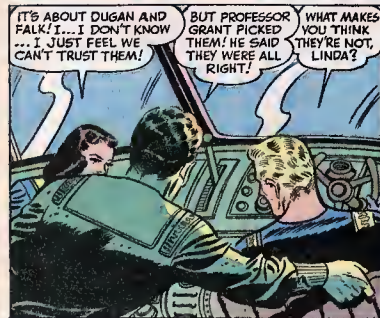
I GET YOU! BUT KEEP IT TO YOURSELF--FOR THE PRESENT.



WOMAN'S INTUITION? PERHAPS IT WAS ONLY THAT, BUT PRESENTLY...

NOW THAT WE'RE SO CLOSE, VULCAN LOOKS PRETTY WEIRD, EVEN WITH THE NAKED EYE!

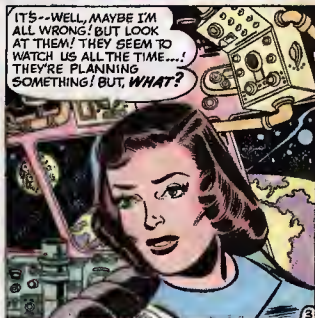
MAYBE I'M WORRIED NEEDLESSLY, BUT... JON, I'VE GOT TO TALK TO YOU AND FREDDIE!



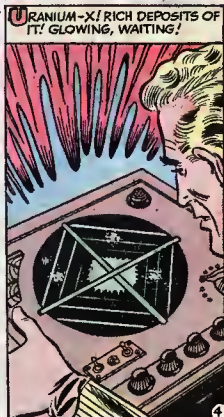
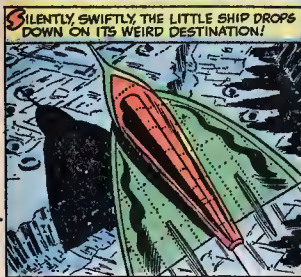
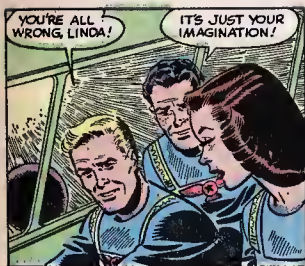
IT'S ABOUT DUGAN AND FALK! I... I DON'T KNOW ... I JUST FEEL WE CAN'T TRUST THEM!

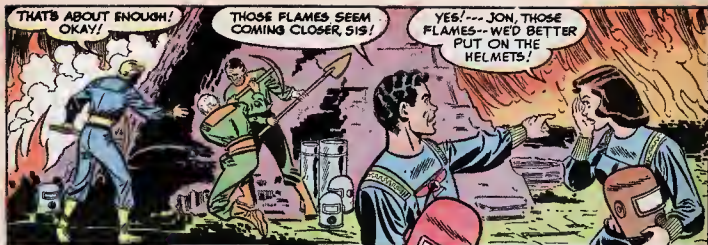
BUT PROFESSOR GRANT PICKED THEM! HE SAID THEY WERE ALL RIGHT!

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THEY'RE NOT, LINDA?



IT'S--WELL, MAYBE I'M ALL WRONG! BUT LOOK AT THEM! THEY SEEM TO WATCH US ALL THE TIME...! THEY'RE PLANNING SOMETHING! BUT, WHAT?





THAT'S ABOUT ENOUGH!  
OKAY!

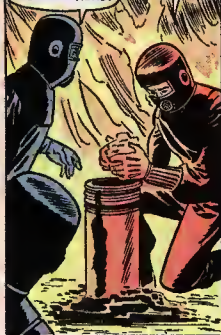
THOSE FLAMES SEEM  
COMING CLOSER, SIS!

YES!--- JON, THOSE  
FLAMES-- WE'D BETTER  
PUT ON THE  
HELMETS!

SUDDENLY, AS THOUGH SPRINGING  
FROM THE SULPHUROUS AIR  
ITSELF...

HURRY IT,  
BOSS, AN' LET'S GET  
OUT OF HERE!

I SURE  
WILL!



AND WITH THE PRECIOUS  
CYLINDERS FILLED...

YOU ALL RIGHT,  
LINDA? WE'LL  
BE CLEAR IN  
A MOMENT!

YES--I--  
GUESS I'M  
ALL RIGHT!



THOSE FLAMES! THERE  
WAS SOMETHING  
MIGHTY QUEER  
ABOUT THEM,  
FREDDIE!

YOU SAID  
IT!



SUDDENLY...

OH--H--!

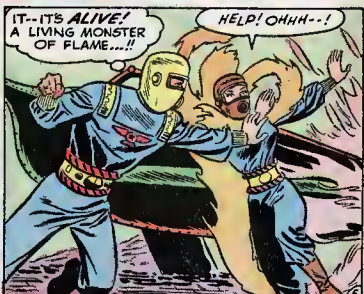
LINDA!  
LINDA  
DEAR!

WHAT--?!

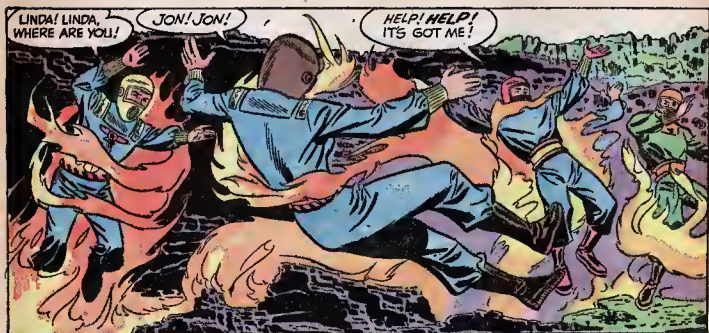


IT--IT'S ALIVE!  
A LIVING MONSTER  
OF FLAME...!!

HELP! OH--H--!







LINDA! LINDA,  
WHERE ARE YOU!

JON! JON!

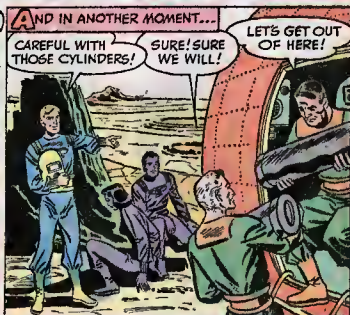
HELP! HELP!  
IT'S GOT ME!



ALL RIGHT  
NOW, LINDA?

YES! OH, JON,  
THAT GRUESOME  
THING--!

THEY'RE BURNING  
OUT-- DYING--!



AND IN ANOTHER MOMENT...

CAREFUL WITH  
THOSE CYLINDERS!

SURE! SURE  
WE WILL!

LET'S GET OUT  
OF HERE!



THOSE MONSTERS  
MUST BE BORN OF  
THE SUPER-HEATED  
VAPOURS OF  
THE AIR!

LIKE SPONTANEOUS  
COMBUSTION! AND  
THEN THEY  
DIE-- BURN  
OUT!

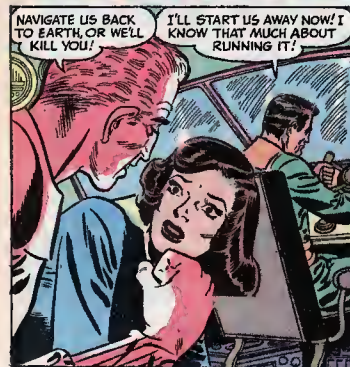
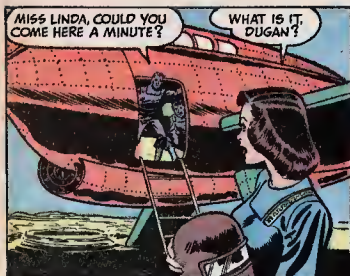
LET'S--  
LET'S  
GET  
ON BOARD  
THE SHIP!



MEANWHILE...

WE COULD BEAT IT  
NOW, BUT WE CAN'T  
NAVIGATE!

NO, BUT THE  
GIRL CAN!  
GET IT?

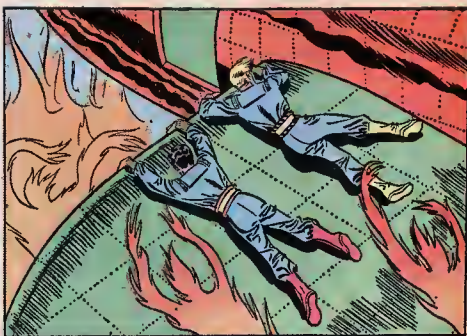




AS THE SHIP LURCHES SUDDENLY  
UPWARD...

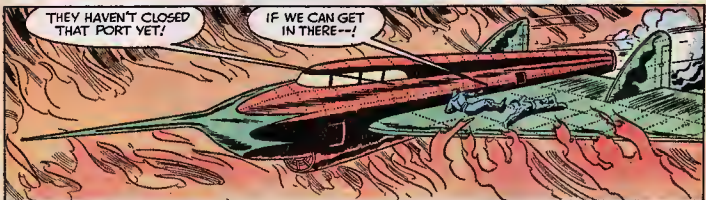
HANG ON,  
FREDDIE!

I'M--TRYING--  
TO!

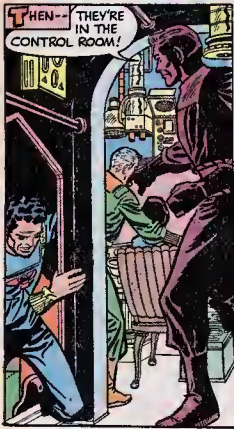


THEY HAVEN'T CLOSED  
THAT PORT YET!

IF WE CAN GET  
IN THERE--!



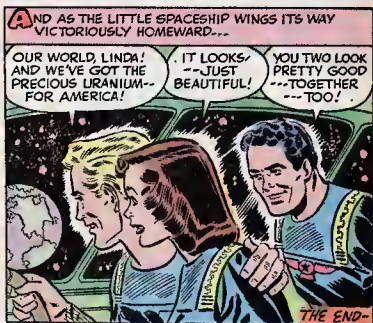
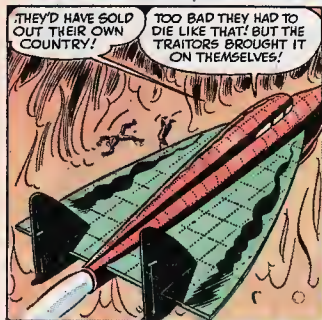
THEN-- THEY'RE  
IN THE  
CONTROL ROOM!



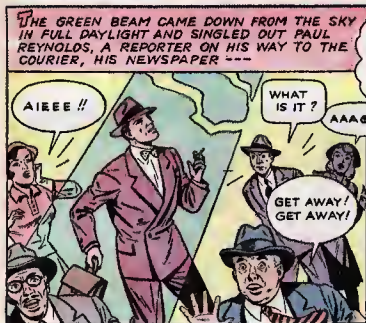
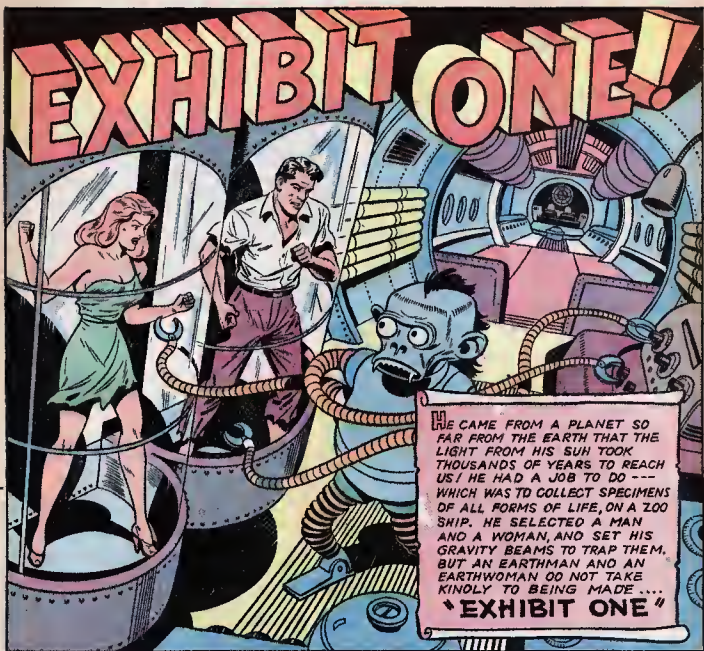
THE GOVERNMENT  
**WE** WORK FOR  
AIN'T TOO FRIENDLY  
WITH AMERICA!  
IT'LL PAY  
BIG FOR  
THIS  
URANIUM-X!  
WE'LL BE  
**RICH!**  
**YIPE!!**  
IT'S  
**TH-TH-TH!!!**

YOU'D BETTER  
MAKE OTHER  
PLANS,  
PALS!







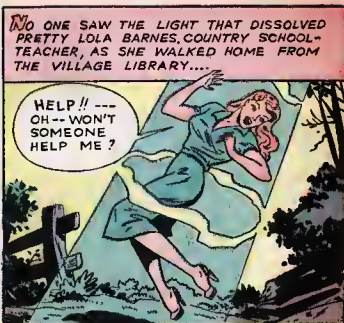




I'M FALLING APART! AND THE LIGHT IS LIFTING ME! DRAWING ME UPWARD.... FASTER AND FASTER!!

POOR DEVIL! IT'S RIPPING HIM APART!!

GULP!

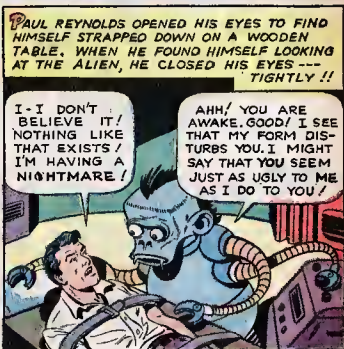


NO ONE SAW THE LIGHT THAT DISSOLVED PRETTY LOLA BARNES, COUNTRY SCHOOL-TEACHER, AS SHE WALKED HOME FROM THE VILLAGE LIBRARY....

HELP!! --- OH-- WON'T SOMEONE HELP ME?



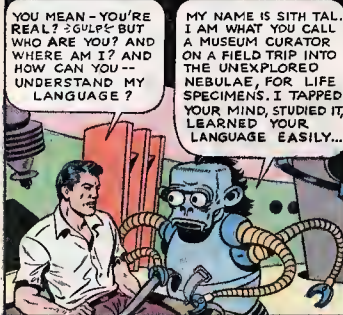
I'M GOING TO FAINT! MY BODY IS FALLING APART... AND YET IT DOESN'T HURT... JUST THIS AWFUL COLD...!



PAUL REYNOLDS OPENED HIS EYES TO FIND HIMSELF STRAPPED DOWN ON A WOODEN TABLE. WHEN HE FOUND HIMSELF LOOKING AT THE ALIEN, HE CLOSED HIS EYES --- TIGHTLY!!

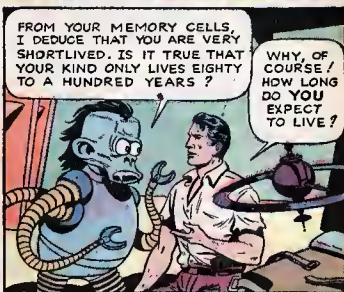
I-I DON'T BELIEVE IT! NOTHING LIKE THAT EXISTS! I'M HAVING A NIGHTMARE!

AHH! YOU ARE AWAKE. GOOD! I SEE THAT MY FORM DISTURBS YOU. I MIGHT SAY THAT YOU SEEM JUST AS UGLY TO ME AS I DO TO YOU!



YOU MEAN--YOU'RE REAL? GULP! BUT WHO ARE YOU? AND WHERE AM I? AND HOW CAN YOU-- UNDERSTAND MY LANGUAGE?

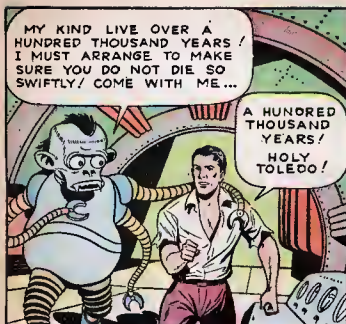
MY NAME IS SITH TAL. I AM WHAT YOU CALL A MUSEUM CURATOR ON A FIELD TRIP INTO THE UNEXPLORED NEBULAE, FOR LIFE SPECIMENS. I TAPPED YOUR MIND, STUDIED IT, LEARNED YOUR LANGUAGE EASILY...



FROM YOUR MEMORY CELLS, I DEDUCE THAT YOU ARE VERY SHORTLIVED. IS IT TRUE THAT YOUR KIND ONLY LIVES EIGHTY TO A HUNDRED YEARS?

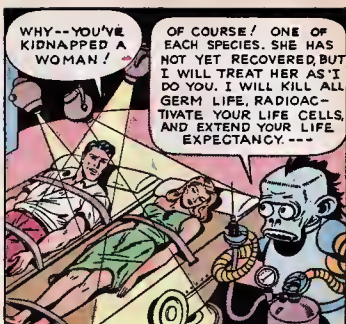
WHY, OF COURSE! HOW LONG DO YOU EXPECT TO LIVE?





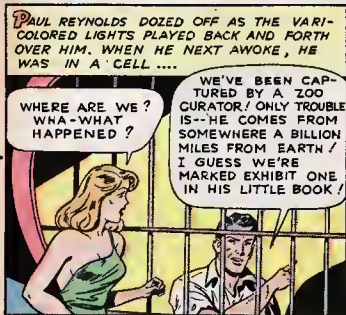
MY KIND LIVE OVER A HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS ! I MUST ARRANGE TO MAKE SURE YOU DO NOT DIE SO SWIFTLY! COME WITH ME...

A HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS! HOLY TOLEDO!



WHY--YOU'VE KIDNAPPED A WOMAN!

OF COURSE! ONE OF EACH SPECIES. SHE HAS NOT YET RECOVERED, BUT I WILL TREAT HER AS I DO YOU. I WILL KILL ALL GERM LIFE, RADIOACTIVE YOUR LIFE CELLS, AND EXTEND YOUR LIFE EXPECTANCY.---



PAUL REYNOLDS DOZED OFF AS THE VARIOUS COLORED LIGHTS PLAYED BACK AND FORTH OVER HIM. WHEN HE NEXT AWOKES, HE WAS IN A CELL ....

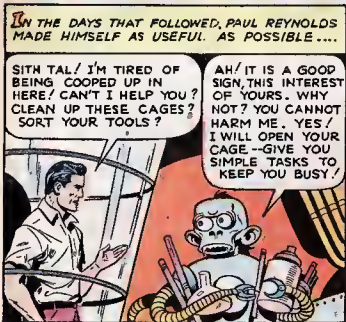
WHERE ARE WE ? WHA-WHAT HAPPENED ?

WE'VE BEEN CAPTURED BY A ZOO CURATOR! ONLY TROUBLE IS--HE COMES FROM SOMEWHERE A BILLION MILES FROM EARTH ! I GUESS WE'RE MARKED EXHIBIT ONE IN HIS LITTLE BOOK !



SOB--KIDNAPPED BY-A--ZOO CURATOR! PUT IN A--CAGE / SOB NEVER SEE MY MOTHER AGAIN ... SOB

EASY THERE ! EASY! NO SENSE LETTING GO. GOT TO MAKE THE BEST OF IT! NEVER CAN TELL. MAYBE WE CAN GET AWAY... SOMEHOW !



IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, PAUL REYNOLDS MADE HIMSELF AS USEFUL AS POSSIBLE ....

SITH TAL! I'M TIRED OF BEING COOPED UP IN HERE! CAN'T I HELP YOU? CLEAN UP THESE CAGES? SORT YOUR TOOLS?

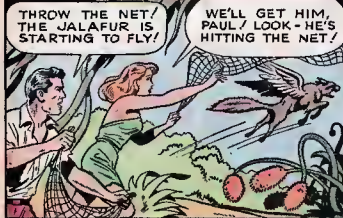
AH! IT IS A GOOD SIGN, THIS INTEREST OF YOURS. WHY NOT? YOU CANNOT HARM ME. YES! I WILL OPEN YOUR CAGE--GIVE YOU SIMPLE TASKS TO KEEP YOU BUSY!



THIS SHIP WORKS BY WARP-DRIVE. IT WARPS SPACE, SO THAT IT CAN TRAVEL EVEN FASTER THAN LIGHT!

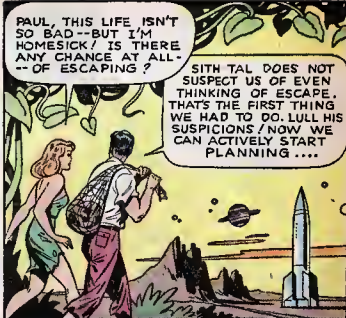
AND YOU EXPECT TO ESCAPE ? WHAT A LAUGH! THE BEST THING IS TO KEEP BUSY.. ..UNTIL WE -- DIE!

IN THE MONTHS AND THE YEARS THAT FOLLOWED, PAUL AND LOLA LEARNED TO ACCEPT THEIR FATE WITH RESIGNATION. IN A WAY, THEY WERE STRANGELY FORTUNATE, FOR THEY WERE THE FIRST MAN AND WOMAN EVER TO SET FOOT ON ANOTHER PLANET ....



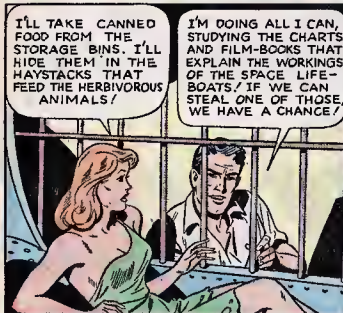
THROW THE NET! THE JALAFUR IS STARTING TO FLY!

WE'LL GET HIM, PAUL! LOOK - HE'S HITTING THE NET!



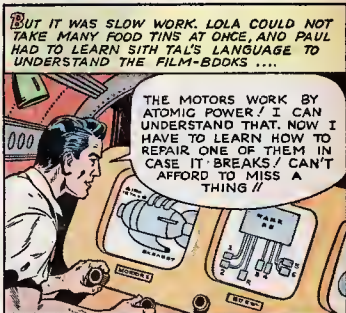
PAUL, THIS LIFE ISN'T SO BAD - BUT I'M HOMESICK! IS THERE ANY CHANCE AT ALL - OF ESCAPING?

SITH TAL DOES NOT SUSPECT US OF EVEN THINKING OF ESCAPE. THAT'S THE FIRST THING WE HAD TO DO. LULL HIS SUSPICIONS! NOW WE CAN ACTIVELY START PLANNING ....



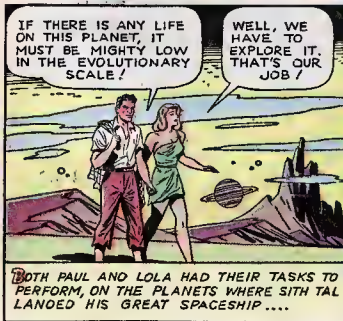
I'LL TAKE CANNED FOOD FROM THE STORAGE BINS. I'LL HIDE THEM IN THE HAYSTACKS THAT FEED THE HERBIVOROUS ANIMALS!

I'M DOING ALL I CAN, STUDYING THE CHARTS AND FILM-BOOKS THAT EXPLAIN THE WORKINGS OF THE SPACE LIFE-BOATS! IF WE CAN STEAL ONE OF THOSE, WE HAVE A CHANCE!



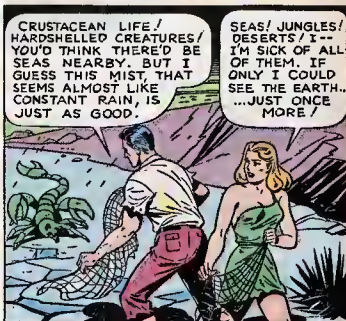
BUT IT WAS SLOW WORK. LOLA COULD NOT TAKE MANY FOOD TINS AT ONCE, AND PAUL HAD TO LEARN SITH TAL'S LANGUAGE TO UNDERSTAND THE FILM-BOOKS ....

THE MOTORS WORK BY ATOMIC POWER! I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT. NOW I HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO REPAIR ONE OF THEM IN CASE IT BREAKS. CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS A THING!!



IF THERE IS ANY LIFE ON THIS PLANET, IT MUST BE MIGHTY LOW IN THE EVOLUTIONARY SCALE!

WELL, WE HAVE TO EXPLORE IT. THAT'S OUR JOB!

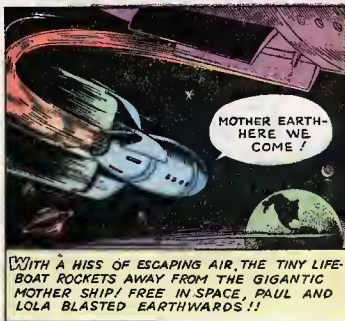
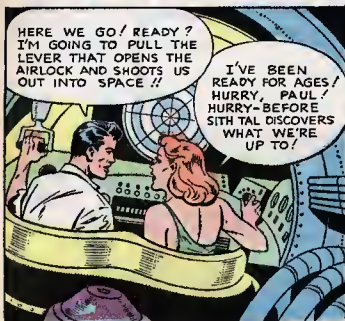
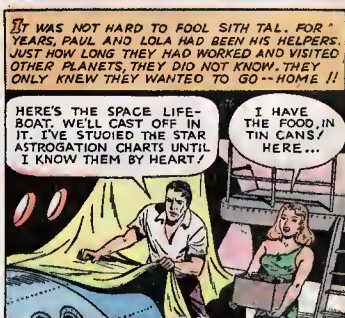


CRUSTACEAN LIFE! HARDSHELLED CREATURES! YOU'D THINK THERE'D BE SEAS NEARBY. BUT I GUESS THIS MIST, THAT SEEMS ALMOST LIKE CONSTANT RAIN, IS JUST AS GOOD.

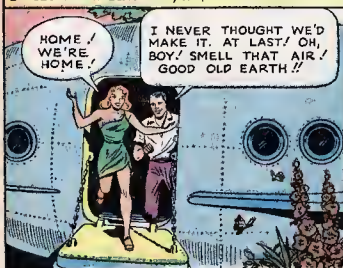
SEAS! JUNGLES! DESERTS! I-- I'M SICK OF ALL OF THEM. IF ONLY I COULD SEE THE EARTH... JUST ONCE MORE!

BOTH PAUL AND LOLA HAD THEIR TASKS TO PERFORM, ON THE PLANETS WHERE SITH TAL LANDED HIS GREAT SPACESHIP ....



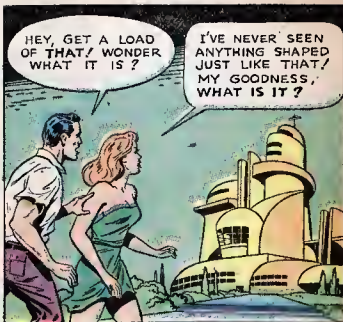


SWIFTLY THE LITTLE ROCKETSHIP BLASTED A PATH ACROSS THE STAR-LADEN LANES OF SPACE. AND AT LONG LAST, ON A WARM SPRING DAY...



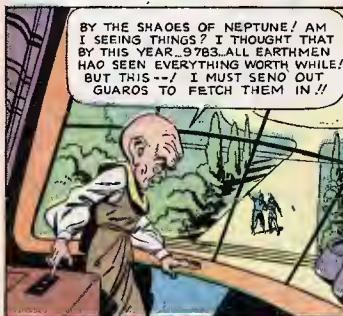
HOME!  
WE'RE  
HOME!

I NEVER THOUGHT WE'D  
MAKE IT. AT LAST! OH,  
BOY! SMELL THAT AIR!  
GOOD OLD EARTH!!

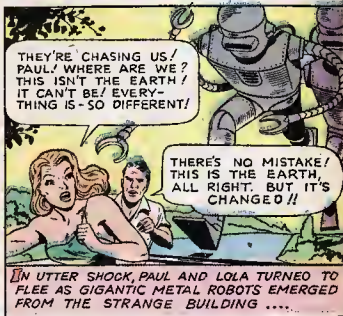


HEY, GET A LOAD  
OF THAT! WONDER  
WHAT IT IS?

I'VE NEVER SEEN  
ANYTHING SHAPED  
JUST LIKE THAT!  
MY GOODNESS,  
WHAT IS IT?



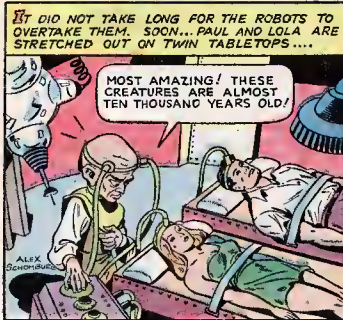
BY THE SHADES OF NEPTUNE! AM  
I SEEING THINGS? I THOUGHT THAT  
BY THIS YEAR...9783...ALL EARTHMEN  
HAD SEEN EVERYTHING WORTH WHILE!  
BUT THIS--! I MUST SEND OUT  
GUARDS TO FETCH THEM IN!!



THEY'RE CHASING US!  
PAUL! WHERE ARE WE?  
THIS ISN'T THE EARTH!  
IT CAN'T BE! EVERY-  
THING IS--SO DIFFERENT!

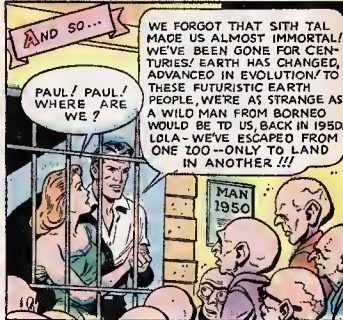
THERE'S NO MISTAKE!  
THIS IS THE EARTH,  
ALL RIGHT. BUT IT'S  
CHANGED!!

IN UTTER SHOCK, PAUL AND LOLA TURNED TO  
FLEE AS GIGANTIC METAL ROBOTS EMERGED  
FROM THE STRANGE BUILDING ....



IT DID NOT TAKE LONG FOR THE ROBOTS TO  
OVERTAKE THEM. SOON... PAUL AND LOLA  
ARE STRETCHED OUT ON TWIN TABLETS....

MOST AMAZING! THESE  
CREATURES ARE ALMOST  
TEN THOUSAND YEARS OLD!



AND SO...

PAUL! PAUL!  
WHERE ARE  
WE?

WE FORGOT THAT SITH TAL  
MADE US ALMOST IMMORTAL!  
WE'VE BEEN GONE FOR CENTU-  
RIES! EARTH HAS CHANGED,  
ADVANCED IN EVOLUTION! TO  
THESE FUTURISTIC EARTH  
PEOPLE, WE'RE AS STRANGE AS  
A WILD MAN FROM BORNEO  
WOULD BE TO US, BACK IN 1950.  
LOLA--WE'VE ESCAPED FROM  
ONE ZOO--ONLY TO LAND  
IN ANOTHER!!!

MAN  
1950



# THE WARNING!

"No, I'm not crazy. I tell you, I've been flying like a bird for the past two months, complete with wings and feathers. I've got to see the President. Why? You should know. You're the secretary to the President of the United States, and certainly if I can prove to him that the Martians are not only planning to attack Earth, but that they have the power and ability to do it successfully, it's your job to get me in to see him. I don't care to whom he's talking, Mr. Secretary. This is more important.

"All right, I'll try to be calm. But I can't guarantee it. Every second counts. Look, here's my identification, Peter Farr, Lieutenant-Colonel, United States Jet Fighter Forces, born in New-Washington-on-the-Potomac, September 19, 2023. That makes me just twenty-seven years old. I'm six feet, two; weigh 190 stripped; my latest G. C. T. score was 145; I've been checked and re-checked by the Base doctors, and they can't find even a trace of anything wrong with my mind.

"The whole thing started just two months ago, a week after Bela Bacsi, the Hungarian dictator, finally surrendered to the Allies. I had been ordered to make an aerial reconnaissance of the Budapest area, and my single-seater jet was fixed up with wide-angle lenses on the cameras which had replaced the rocket-gun turrets.

"I was flying a souped-up job which I had worked on myself so that I could test the new anti-gravity suits which we had just been issued, and after I had all the pictures I wanted, I decided to play around for a little while. I took my ship up to four miles, where I wouldn't be bothered with traffic, and, I really let her out. She was a beauty, all right. Handled like a sweetheart. In the first power dive, I had her up to Mach 1.8.

"I pulled out of my dive and headed upstairs again. This time I wanted to get higher, so I could see what she would do as the air got thinner. I was way above the clouds, so there was nothing to see but space. And then it happened. One second the sky was completely empty. And the next second there had materialized before me a huge sphere with a gaping entrance hole at least a hundred yards across! Naturally, I tried to brake, or to pull to one side. But my controls were frozen tight. Don't ask me why or how. All I know is that I couldn't move them, with all my strength. And as I yanked helplessly on every lever on

the control board, a calm, detached voice rang in my ears. 'Don't try to maneuver your ship, Colonel,' it said. 'We have frozen your controls and your radio. Just sit quietly and you will be all right.'

"Well, a United States officer doesn't take orders like that, so I kept on yanking levers and pushing buttons. But nothing seemed to work. I shot right into the gaping entrance, there was a loud clang as the huge door slammed shut, and my ship came to a dead stop just as if I had rammed into a concrete wall. I have no idea why I didn't wind up smashed to atoms by the sudden deceleration, but I didn't. That's all I know. And please, wouldn't we save time if I could tell this story direct to the President? Then I wouldn't have to repeat it. Huh? Oh, all right.

"Outside my ship was the blackest darkness I've ever seen. The only light came from my instrument panel, and I watched the altimeter swing to its maximum height of twenty-five miles in a fraction of a second. From then on there was no actual movement, but I had a subconscious feeling of moving faster and higher than I had ever dreamed of going.

"After seven minutes by the control panel clock, this feeling of motion stopped, and light flooded in from behind me. It was an eerie, coppery-red light like nothing I had ever seen before. I started to reach for the door controls to get out of the plane, but the voice I had heard before came again. 'Just sit where you are, Colonel,' it said. 'We can move you faster than you can yourself.'

"I sat in the ship, which zoomed out of the entrance hole and shot me, so quickly that I couldn't see anything of the countryside, into a tremendous high-walled courtyard. There the plane stopped and the door opened. I got out.

"Half-a-dozen men, fine-looking specimens about six feet high, with reddish hair and blue eyes, surrounded me. They were perfectly normal-looking people by our standards, that is, until the leader of the group raised his arm and pointed to a doorway. Then, for the first time, I noticed that a tremendous wing was attached to the underside of his arm! When I moved ahead and he dropped his arm, the wing folded back out of sight, and became completely invisible. I continued walking in the direction he had indicated, surrounded by all six men, who were dressed in what looked like the old Marine Corps blue dress uniforms

of a century ago, except that the blouses were sleeveless.

"When I entered the building, the leader sat at a table and motioned me to sit opposite. He slipped a pair of earphones on his head and spoke into a cube-like microphone. I recognized the voice I had heard in the plane.

"Welcome to Mars, Colonel," he said. "Forgive us for any inconvenience you may have suffered, but we must be careful to select our visitors when they are alone, so that no word of our presence reaches Earth. We hope you will be comfortable here. And please forgive this clumsy apparatus. It is the only way I can speak in Martian and you in English, and we can have our words automatically translated."

"It took me a couple of seconds to digest this. Then I jumped to my feet, rushed out and looked around. I still couldn't be sure I was on Mars, but I knew for a dead certainty that I was no place on Earth!

"The Martian came to the door, still holding his mike. He handed me what looked like binoculars. 'Here,' he said. 'Try these. Earth is there,' he added, pointing to the sky. 'You will be able to see it clearly with these glasses.'

"I put the binoculars to my eyes and looked where he pointed. There, Earth was in sharp focus, and I could clearly make out the familiar outlines of North and South America! I was on Mars!

"The five other soldiers, who had surrounded me, gently herded me back into the room. There the Martian leader started talking again.

"Our plans are complete," he said. "We are set to move in on Earth and take over the planet. We have to do this in self-defense. We have no water, and Earth has plenty. We cannot grow plants in our sandy soil, and are slowly dying out because of synthetic foods. But this will not matter to you Earth people, for if you cooperate well, we shall set aside certain areas where you may continue to live."

"I blew higher than a kite. What this bird-like creature was proposing was that the Martians would take over Earth and permit us to live in reservations! He let me rave. It didn't upset him in the least. When I was finished, he merely said: 'You will cooperate, Colonel. You see, we have tortures far more refined and terrible than any you have ever heard of. We need Earth people to work with us. True, we have many Martians already on Earth, many in very high positions. But for psychological reasons, we want Earthmen to work with us as well.'

"The Martian turned away from the microphone and said something in a queer, bird-like trill. Instantly, the five soldiers grabbed me and carried me to a table in the rear of the room, where they strapped me down firmly. One of the soldiers pulled out of his pocket

a kind of measuring tape, laid it on the underside of my arm and trilled out some words. Another soldier walked to a closet and came back carrying a large pair of wings!

"I guess I must have screamed, because the leader, who was still sitting at the table, looked up at me. He picked up the microphone and spoke again. 'This won't hurt you, Colonel,' he said. 'Our surgery is far superior to anything on Earth. All we do is just pass a vibro-knife over your arm. This provides a slit in which wings are placed, so that you can fly the same as we. When you return to Earth, the wings will be removed. All that will remain is a thin scar which will be no more visible than a scratch. But when you come back to Mars, and your wings are again put against the scars, they will open and your wings will stay firmly fixed to your arms.'

"I don't know whether it was my rage or the fact that the Martians *are* skillful surgeons, but I didn't even feel the vibro-knife. All I know is that when I got up about five minutes later, each arm carried a full-sized wing!

"For the next two months I spent practically the whole day being taught to fly, solo and in formation. It was easy for me, a professional flyer. But I must admit that some of their attack formations are as far ahead of ours as our jet planes are ahead of the 20th century version!

"When the Martian leader called me in for a talk, I had my plans all ready. I pretended to be sold on the idea of cooperating, and agreed to come back to Earth so that I could lead advance landing forces to their bases. They have a completely different time system on Mars, so I don't know exactly when they'll be coming. But I do know it'll be soon.

"The important thing is that I'm the only man on Earth who knows that they're planning to attack us, and the only man who knows how to stop the devices they have, which can paralyze all our motors just the way they stopped my engine dead. They think I'm here to help them. Evidently I did a good job, or they would never have let me come back to Earth. All the time I knew that if I ever did get back, I'd make a bee-line for the President of the United States, to let him know what's cooking. Can I get in to him now, please, Mr. Secretary?

"What's that? Identification marks on my arms, tattooed alongside the wing scars? No, they didn't do that to me. The only ones who have them are the leaders, and they carry them on their wrists. It's hard for me to describe the marks . . . but they look just . . . like . . . that! Just like the marks *you* have on *your* wrists!

"Good Lord! You're *one of them*! You're a Martian!"

THE END



# WEDDING GIFT

ON JANUARY 1, 1999—JUST FOUR DAYS BEFORE HIS MARRIAGE—KEVITT STANDISH MADE THE FIRST JOURNEY INTO THE 6th DIMENSION! THIS IS THE STORY OF THAT AMAZING JOURNEY, AND OF THE GIFT HE BROUGHT BACK TO HIS BRIDE... A GIFT SO STRANGE AND OF SUCH MAGNITUDE AS TO MAKE IT THE MOST UNUSUAL WEDDING GIFT OF ALL TIME!

THERE IT IS, MARCIA!... SIMPLE LOOKING, ISN'T IT? JUST A BELT AND A HELMET... BUT THE CONTROLS ON THAT BELT CAN WHISK ME AWAY INTO THE 6th DIMENSION OF TIME!

NOT YOU, DARLING! SOMEONE ELSE! YOU'VE ALREADY MADE A GREAT CONTRIBUTION AS ITS INVENTOR. LET SOMEONE ELSE RISK HIS LIFE, IN A TEST!

BUT THINK OF THE MARVEL OF THAT FIRST TRIP INTO THE 6th DIMENSION... HURLING INTO THE TIME CURRENT... TO ANY PAST OR FUTURE ERA! YOU CAN'T ASK ME TO PASS UP THAT GREAT ADVENTURE!

I'VE GOT THE RIGHT, DEAR. REMEMBER, WE ARE TO BE MARRIED IN FIVE DAYS!

I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN, DEAR. AND IT'S FOUR DAYS, NOT FIVE, BEFORE OUR MARRIAGE. TODAY IS THE FIRST OF JANUARY... ON THE FIFTH OF JANUARY, WE BECOME MAN AND WIFE!

SOMETIMES I THINK YOU FIND THIS TIME GADGET OF YOURS MORE EXCITING THAN OUR COMING MARRIAGE!



BOTH ARE EQUALLY EXCITING TO ME, MY DEAR! BUT YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT I'M A SCIENTIST, AS WELL AS YOUR FUTURE HUSBAND!

KEVITY, I'LL BE AWAY GETTING THE COUNTRY HOUSE IN ORDER FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, AND I WANT YOU TO SOLEMNLY PROMISE ME....



...THAT YOU WON'T ATTEMPT TO TRY THE TIME-BELT YOURSELF!! PLEASE, DARLING, PROMISE ME!

I'LL PROMISE YOU THAT NOTHING WILL KEEP ME FROM ATTENDING OUR WEDDING, FOUR DAYS FROM NOW!



I'LL BE BACK ON THE FIFTH, DARLING. I'LL MEET YOU HERE AT TEN O'CLOCK, AND WE'LL BOTH GO TO THE MARRIAGE MAGISTRATE TOGETHER. I'M TAKING NO CHANCES THAT YOU'LL FORGET TO BE THERE!

UNTIL THE FIFTH, DARLING! GOODBYE!



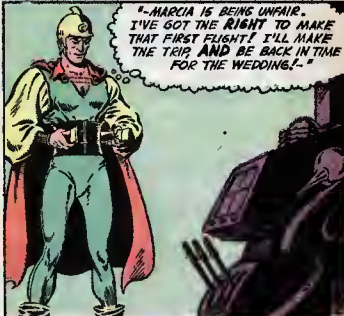
AFTER MARCIA LEAVES, THE YOUNG SCIENTIST REGARDS HIS CREATION WITH CONFLICTING EMOTIONS.

"--MY CREATION... MINE! WHOEVER MAKES THE FIRST JOURNEY INTO TIME WILL BE THE GREATEST OF ALL ADVENTURERS! I WANT THAT THRILL FOR MYSELF... BUT MARCIA IS DEAD-SET AGAINST IT...!--"

Qooo...



"--MARCIA IS BEING UNFAIR. I'VE GOT THE RIGHT TO MAKE THAT FIRST FLIGHT! I'LL MAKE THE TRIP AND BE BACK IN TIME FOR THE WEDDING!--"





**His eyes shining with the inward glow of the pioneer, standing on the threshold of a new era for mankind, Kevitt Standish adjusts the intricate belt and helmet! Then, with trembling fingers, he presses the button that will project him into the unknown 6th dimension of time!**

**MY LIFE'S WORK! AND NOW... I PRESS THE BUTTON... SO...**



**FLASHING COLOR AND MOVEMENT... A KALEIDOSCOPE OF PICTURES AND SOUND... AN ALMOST UNBEARABLE WRENCHING OF SOUL AND BODY... AND KEVITT STANDISH IS WHIRLED AWAY INTO THE ETERNAL COSMOS!**

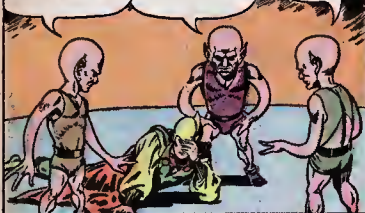


**AFTER AN ENDLESS TIME, KEVITT STANDISH RECOVERS CONSCIOUSNESS...**

**A MOMENT AGO THIS CREATURE WAS NOT HERE!**

**SUDDENLY, HE APPEARS OUT OF NOTHINGNESS!**

**WHAT MANNER OF AMAZING BEING CAN HE BE?**



**THE OLD WRITINGS TELL OF "MIGHTY ONES"! HE MUST BE SUCH A ONE, COME TO OUR PLANET IN ITS GREATEST HOUR!!**

**LUP, YOU SPEAK WITH GREAT WISDOM—THIS IS UNDOUBTEDLY A "MIGHTY ONE"! I WILL SUMMON TANU, THE GREAT DARR!**



**STANDISH LOOKS UPON THESE WEIRD BEINGS WITH AMAZEMENT! THOUGH HE KNOWS THEY SPEAK A TONGUE DIFFERENT FROM ANY HE HAS HEARD, STILL, AS IN A FANTASTIC DREAM, HE UNDERSTANDS THEM, AND HE KNOWS THAT WHEN HE SPEAKS, HIS SPEECH WILL BE THE SAME AS THEIRS!**

**"—SO THIS IS WHAT MAN WILL BECOME IN THE DISTANT FUTURE! DEFINITELY NOT AN IMPROVEMENT, PHYSICALLY, OVER THE OLD MODEL! I MUST FIND OUT WHAT YEAR THIS IS!"**

**THE GREAT DARR WILL BE PLEASED! THE COMING OF THE "MIGHTY ONE" IS A GOOD OMEN—PROOF THAT OUR INTERPLANETARY MISSILE OF DEATH WILL BE SUCCESSFUL!**

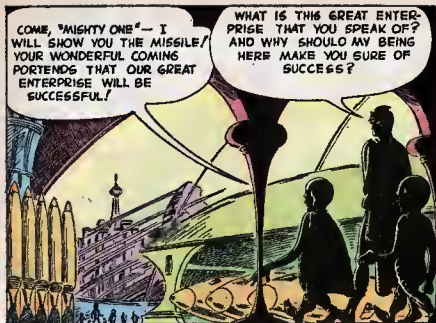


**WHAT YEAR IS THIS, FRIEND... AND WHAT IS THIS MISSILE OF INTERPLANETARY DEATH YOU SPEAK OF?**

**THIS IS THE YEAR 5300 OF THE 3rd CYCLE! AS TO OUR MISSILE... OUR GREAT DARR, TANU, WILL TELL YOU OF THAT!**



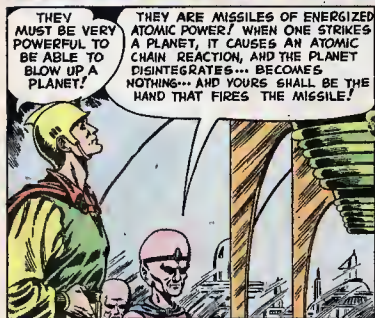
**I AM TANU, "MIGHTY ONE"! WELCOME!**



COME, "MIGHTY ONE"— I WILL SHOW YOU THE MISSILE! YOUR WONDERFUL COMING PORTENDS THAT OUR GREAT ENTERPRISE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL!

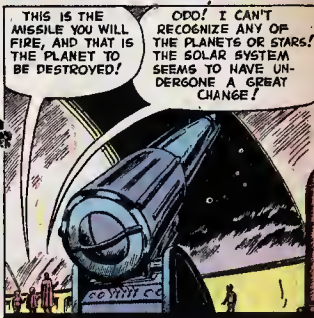
WHAT IS THIS GREAT ENTERPRISE THAT YOU SPEAK OF? AND WHY SHOULD MY BEING HERE MAKE YOU SURE OF SUCCESS?

YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I, FOR THE WRITINGS TELL US THAT THE "MIGHTY ONES" KNOW ALL! BUT, PERHAPS YOU TEST ME, SO I SHALL ANSWER! THE GREAT ENTERPRISE IS THE DESTRUCTION OF A PLANET THAT OUR TIME READERS HAVE TOLD US WILL, IN THE FUTURE, DESTROY US! WE HAVE BEEN AFRAID THAT OUR MISSILE MAY MISS THE TARGET. BUT, WITH YOUR HAND TO GUIDE IT, THERE IS NO CHANCE OF FAILURE!



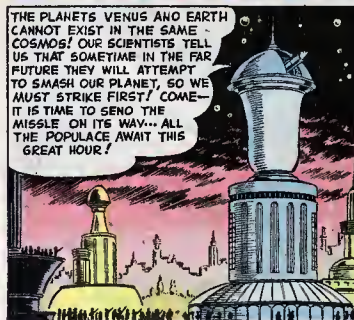
THEY MUST BE VERY POWERFUL TO BE ABLE TO BLOW UP A PLANET!

THEY ARE MISSILES OF ENERGIZED ATOMIC POWER! WHEN ONE STRIKES A PLANET, IT CAUSES AN ATOMIC CHAIN REACTION, AND THE PLANET DISINTEGRATES... BECOMES NOTHING... AND YOURS SHALL BE THE HAND THAT FIRES THE MISSILE!



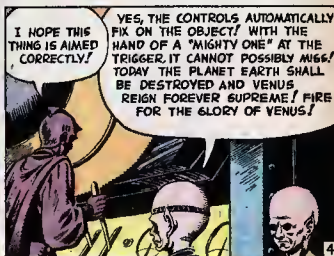
THIS IS THE MISSILE YOU WILL FIRE, AND THAT IS THE PLANET TO BE DESTROYED!

ODO! I CAN'T RECOGNIZE ANY OF THE PLANETS OR STARS! THE SOLAR SYSTEM SEEMS TO HAVE UNDERGONE A GREAT CHANGE!



THE PLANETS VENUS AND EARTH CANNOT EXIST IN THE SAME COSMOS! OUR SCIENTISTS TELL US THAT SOMETIME IN THE FAR FUTURE THEY WILL ATTEMPT TO SMASH OUR PLANET, SO WE MUST STRIKE FIRST! COME— IT IS TIME TO SEND THE MISSILE ON ITS WAY... ALL THE POPULACE AWAIT THIS GREAT HOUR!

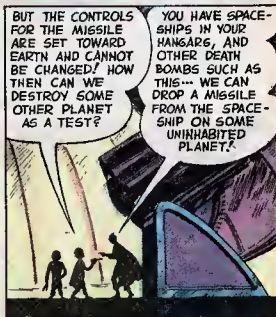
CROUCHING BEFORE THE MONSTROUS ROCKET CANNON, STANDISH'S FINGERS TIGHTEN ON THE TRIGGER OF THE HUGE MACHINE! ANOTHER SECOND AND HE WILL BLAST THE PLANET EARTH FROM THE GALAXY!



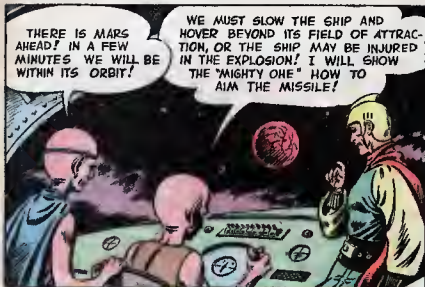
I HOPE THIS THING IS AIMED CORRECTLY!

YES, THE CONTROLS AUTOMATICALLY FIX ON THE OBJECT! WITH THE HAND OF A "MIGHTY ONE" AT THE TRIGGER IT CANNOT POSSIBLY MISS! TODAY THE PLANET EARTH SHALL BE DESTROYED AND VENUS REIGN FOREVER SUPREME! FIRE FOR THE GLORY OF VENUS!





BEYOND THE GRAVITY PULL OF VENUS, THE HUGE SHIP HURTLES WITH INCREDIBLE SPEED TOWARD THE DEAD RED PLANET!



THERE IS MARS AHEAD! IN A FEW MINUTES WE WILL BE WITHIN ITS ORBIT!

WE MUST SLOW THE SHIP AND HOVER BEYOND ITS FIELD OF ATTRACTION, OR THE SHIP MAY BE INJURED IN THE EXPLOSION! I WILL SHOW THE "MIGHTY ONE" HOW TO AIM THE MISSILE!

THE SHIP IS NOW HOVERING ABOVE MARS! WHEN THE PLANET ENTERS THE FIELD OF SIGHT, PULL THE LEVER!

"I MUST NOT MISS WITH THE FIRST MISSILE... SO THAT THE SECOND REMAINS IN THE SHIP WHEN WE LEAVE!"



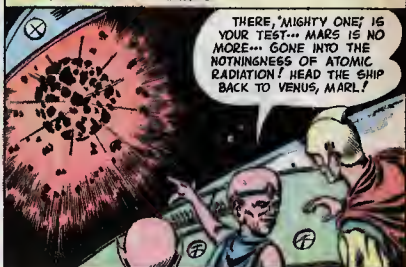
MARS SWIMS LIKE A RED GLOBE INTO THE FIELD OF THE BOMB SIGHT, AND WITH A MUTTERED PRAYER, STANDISH PULLS THE LEVER!

STANDISH RUSHES TO THE WINDOW AS THE BOMB HITS! A WORLD EXPLODES BEFORE HIS EYES, AND VANISHES IN THE COSMIC DARKNESS!

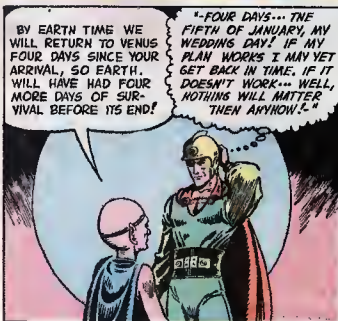


NOW!

WELL DONE!



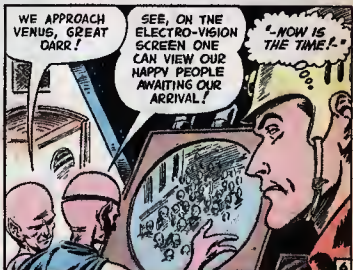
THERE, 'MIGHTY ONE,' IS YOUR TEST... MARS IS NO MORE... GONE INTO THE NOTHINGNESS OF ATOMIC RADIATION! HEAD THE SHIP BACK TO VENUS, MARL!



BY EARTH TIME WE WILL RETURN TO VENUS FOUR DAYS SINCE YOUR ARRIVAL, SO EARTH WILL HAVE HAD FOUR MORE DAYS OF SURVIVAL BEFORE ITS END!

"-FOUR DAYS... THE FIFTH OF JANUARY, MY WEDDING DAY! IF MY PLAN WORKS I MAY YET GET BACK IN TIME, IF IT DOESN'T WORK... WELL, NOTHING WILL MATTER THEN ANYHOW!"

THE SPACE SHIP SPEEDS BACK TOWARD ITS HOME PLANET, AND ON THE SECOND DAY, A HAGGARD EARTHMAN WATCHES THE APPROACH TO VENUS!

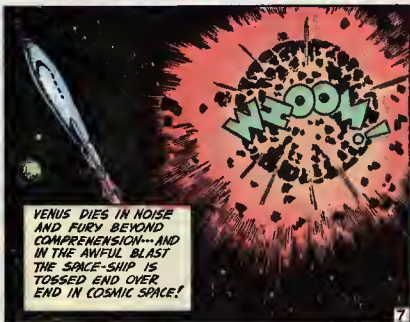
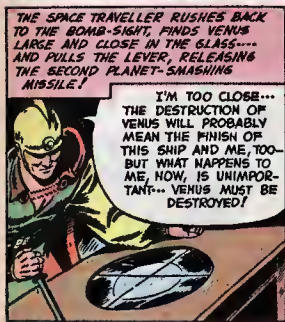
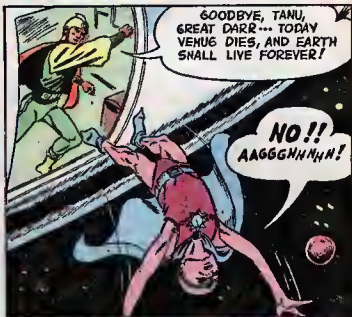
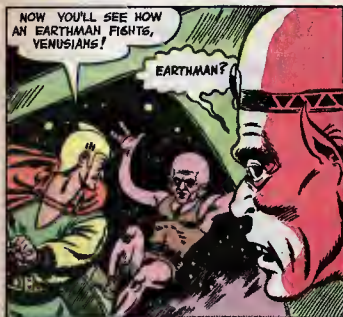


WE APPROACH VENUS, GREAT GARR!

SEE, ON THE ELECTRO-VISION SCREEN ONE CAN VIEW OUR HAPPY PEOPLE AWAITING OUR ARRIVAL!

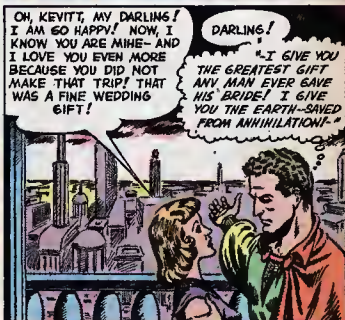
"-NOW IS THE TIME!"







ONCE AGAIN STANDISH EXPERIENCES THE WHIRLING, SOUL-SHATTERING NEAR-DEATH AS HIS BODY PLUNGES THROUGH THE BARRIERS OF TIME AND SPACE!



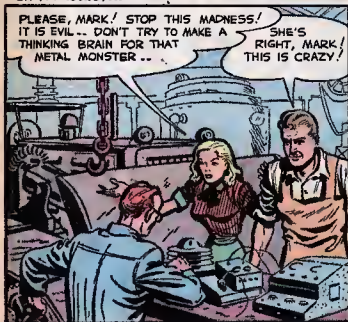


CAN MAN CREATE A MACHINE THAT THINKS? PERHAPS! AND IF HE CAN, WILL HE BE ABLE TO CONTROL IT? OR WILL IT TURN ON ITS CREATOR? THIS IS THE STORY OF ONE MAN WHO TRIED... AND SUCCEEDED ONLY IN CREATING...

# The STEEL MONSTER



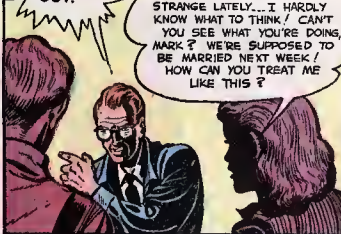
IT IS NEARLY DAWN, ON AN ISLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF A GREAT RIVER... BUT MARK DANE, SCIENTIST, ASSISTED BY HIS FIANCE, WENDY TRAVIS, AND HIS CO-WORKER, RALPH RICHARDS, STILL WORKS ON A PROJECT...



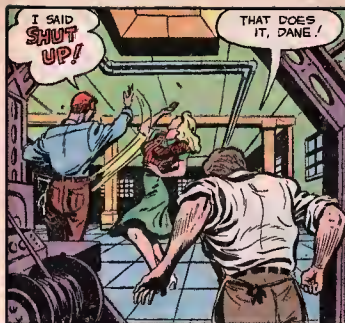
PLEASE, MARK! STOP THIS MADNESS!  
IT IS EVIL... DON'T TRY TO MAKE A  
THINKING BRAIN FOR THAT  
METAL MONSTER...

SHE'S  
RIGHT, MARK!  
THIS IS CRAZY!

**SHUT UP!!** THE BOTH OF YOU! GET UP TO THE  
HOUSE, WENDY! YOU'LL LEARN TO OBEY ME!  
AND YOU, RICHARDS! YOU'RE JUST MY  
ASSISTANT! KEEP YOUR PLACE!  
OR ELSE... GET  
**OUT!**



PLEASE, DARLING...  
YOU'VE BEEN ACTING SO  
STRANGE LATELY... I HARDLY  
KNOW WHAT TO THINK! CAN'T  
YOU SEE WHAT YOU'RE DOING,  
MARK? WE'RE SUPPOSED TO  
BE MARRIED NEXT WEEK!  
HOW CAN YOU TREAT ME  
LIKE THIS?



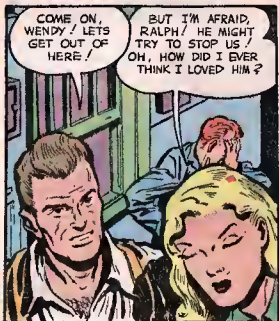
I SAID  
**SHUT  
UP!**

THAT DOES  
IT, DANE!



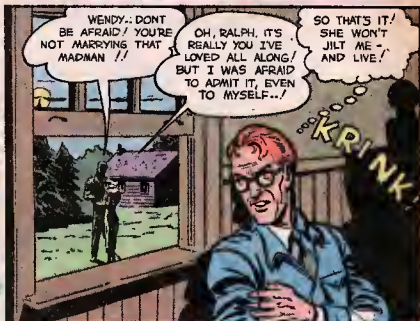
I WAS GOING TO QUIT,  
ANYWAY, BUT THIS  
IS MORE FUN!

RALPH! YOU  
SHOULDN'T HAVE  
DONE IT!



COME ON,  
WENDY! LETS  
GET OUT OF  
HERE!

BUT I'M AFRAID,  
RALPH! HE MIGHT  
TRY TO STOP US!  
OH, HOW DID I EVER  
THINK I LOVED HIM?



WENDY.. DONT  
BE AFRAID! YOU'RE  
NOT MARRYING THAT  
MADMAN !!

OH, RALPH. IT'S  
REALLY YOU I'VE  
LOVED ALL ALONG!  
BUT I WAS AFRAID  
TO ADMIT IT, EVEN  
TO MYSELF..!

SO THAT'S IT!  
SHE WON'T  
JILT ME -  
AND LIVE!



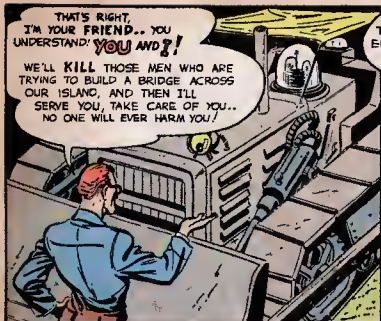
THAT NOISE!  
WHAT.. NO! NO!  
**DONT!**



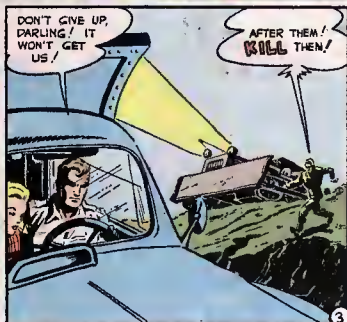
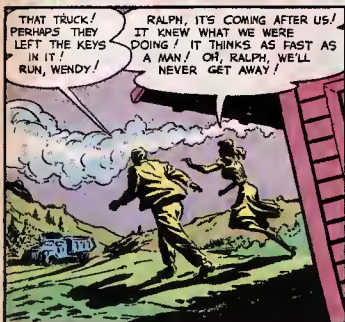
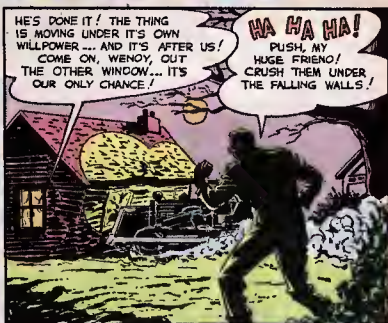
**TICK! TICK!**

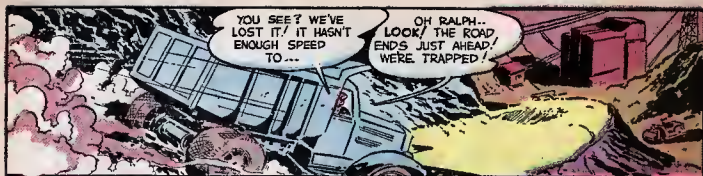
..DON'T KILL ME! PLEASE... I'M  
YOUR 'FRIEND! I MADE YOU...!  
YOU HAVE A BRAIN; YOU CAN  
THINK! I'LL.. **HELP YOU...**  
BRING YOU GASOLINE.. OIL...  
EVERYTHING YOU NEED! I... I'LL  
BE YOUR  
SLAVE!





FIVE MINUTES LATER...

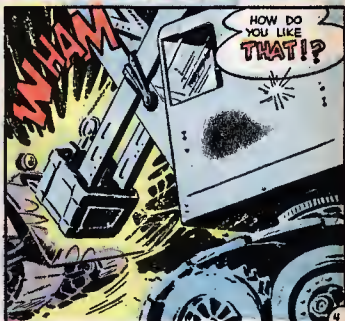




RALPH AND WENDY LEAP FOR THEIR LIVES. AND THEN.... THE HEAVY TRUCK SMASHES HEAD-ON INTO THE BULLDOZER!



AS THE ANGRY BULLDOZER CHARGES, RALPH WORKS THE CONTROLS AND MEETS THE CHARGE WITH A MIGHTY SWING OF THE BIG SHOVEL. AND THE BATTLE IS ON... A BATTLE OF GIANTIC, HIGH-POWERED MACHINES!

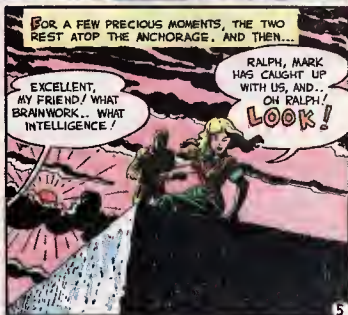
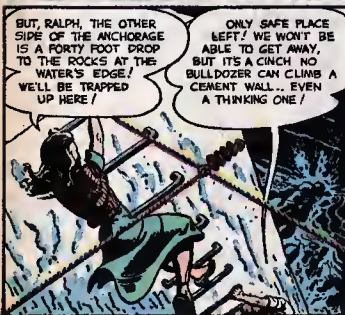
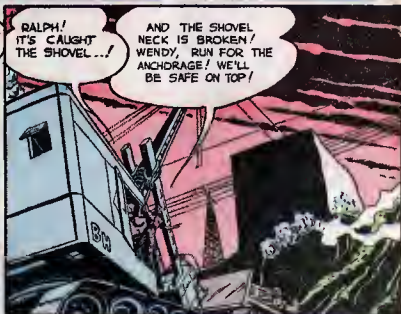
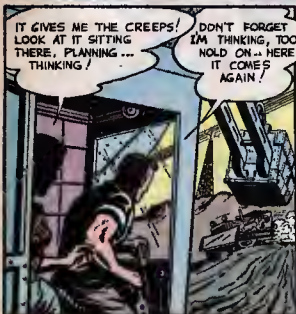
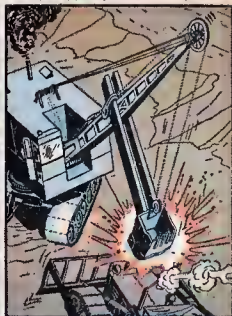
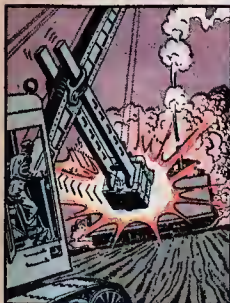




WITH UNCANNY INTELLIGENCE, THE  
BULLDOZER CHARGES...

...FEINTS CLEVERLY...

...AND CHARGES AGAIN AND AGAIN!



IT GIVES ME THE CREEPS!  
LOOK AT IT SITTING  
THERE, PLANNING ...  
THINKING!

DON'T FORGET  
I'M THINKING, TOO!  
HOLD ON-- HERE  
IT COMES  
AGAIN!

RALPH!  
IT'S CAUGHT  
THE SHOVEL...

AND THE SHOVEL  
NECK IS BROKEN!  
WENDY, RUN FOR THE  
ANCHORAGE! WE'LL  
BE SAFE ON TOP!

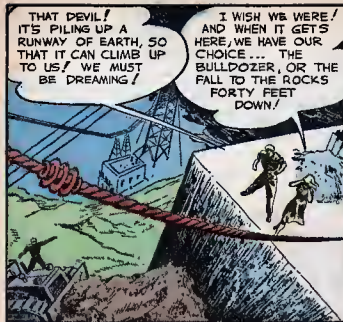
BUT, RALPH, THE OTHER  
SIDE OF THE ANCHORAGE  
IS A FORTY FOOT DROP  
TO THE ROCKS AT THE  
WATER'S EDGE!  
WE'LL BE TRAPPED  
UP HERE!

ONLY SAFE PLACE  
LEFT! WE WON'T BE  
ABLE TO GET AWAY,  
BUT IT'S A CINCH NO  
BULLDOZER CAN CLIMB A  
CEMENT WALL... EVEN  
A THINKING ONE!

FOR A FEW PRECIOUS MOMENTS, THE TWO  
REST ATOP THE ANCHORAGE. AND THEN...

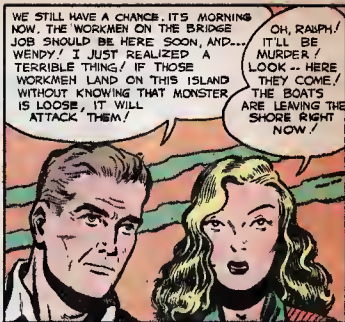
EXCELLENT,  
MY FRIEND! WHAT  
BRANNWORK... WHAT  
INTELLIGENCE!

RALPH, MARK  
HAG CAUGHT UP  
WITH US, AND...  
OH RALPH!  
**LOOK!**



THAT DEVIL!  
IT'S PILING UP A  
RUNWAY OF EARTH, SO  
THAT IT CAN CLIMB UP  
TO US! WE MUST  
BE DREAMING!

I WISH WE WERE!  
AND WHEN IT GETS  
HERE, WE HAVE OUR  
CHOICE... THE  
BULLDOZER, OR THE  
FALL TO THE ROCKS  
FORTY FEET  
DOWN!



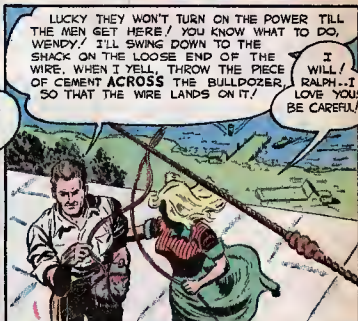
WE STILL HAVE A CHANCE. IT'S MORNING  
NOW. THE WORKMEN ON THE BRIDGE  
JOB SHOULD BE HERE SOON, AND...  
WENDY! I JUST REALIZED A  
TERRIBLE THING! IF THOSE  
WORKMEN LAND ON THIS ISLAND  
WITHOUT KNOWING THAT MONSTER  
IS LOOSE, IT WILL  
ATTACK THEM!

OH, RALPH!  
IT'LL BE  
MURDER!  
LOOK -- HERE,  
THEY COME!  
THE BOATS  
ARE LEAVING THE  
SHORE RIGHT  
NOW!



WE MUST **DO** SOMETHING BEFORE... THE  
POWER LINES. WENDY, LISTEN, I HAVE AN  
IDEA! IF WE COULD GET HOLD OF THOSE  
POWER LINES, AND THEN IF I COULD GET  
DOWN TO THE SHACK WHERE THE  
MAIN SWITCH IS...

I'LL  
HELP, RALPH--  
JUST TELL ME  
WHAT TO  
DO!



LUCKY THEY WON'T TURN ON THE POWER TILL  
THE MEN GET HERE! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO,  
WENDY! I'LL SWING DOWN TO THE  
SHACK ON THE LOOSE END OF THE  
WIRE. WHEN I YELL, THROW THE PIECE  
OF CEMENT **ACROSS** THE BULLDOZER,  
SO THAT THE WIRE LANDS ON IT!

I  
WILL!  
RALPH... I  
LOVE YOU!  
BE CAREFUL!

A MOMENT LATER...



NOW, RALPH!  
IT'S ALMOST  
TO THE  
TOP!

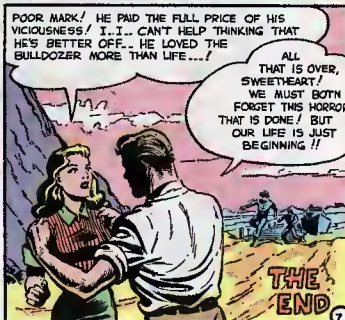
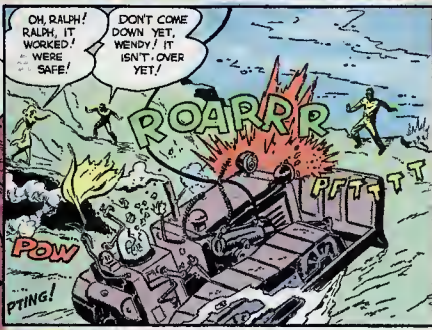
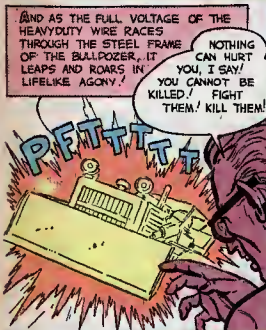
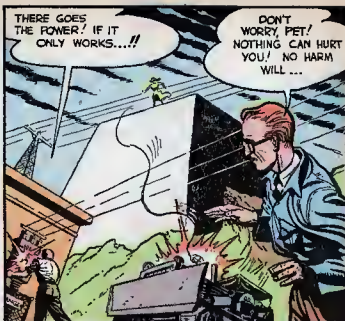
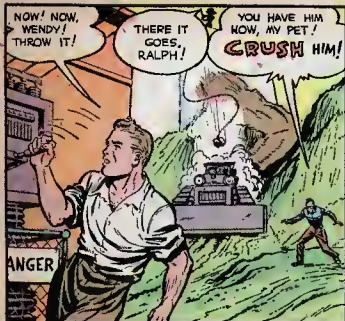
HERE I  
**GO!**



HURRY, RALPH! THE BULLDOZER  
IS COMING DOWN! IT'S  
COMING AROUND THERE  
TO GET YOU!

OH-HO-NO!  
YOU FOOL! YOU  
CAN'T... ESCAPE!

**RRRRR!**





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CAN WHISTLE—  
OR  
HUM A TUNE—

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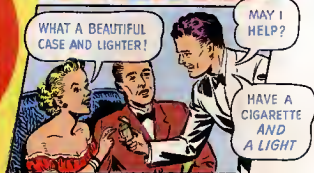
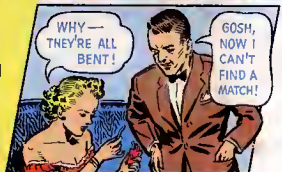
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